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PATENT  
B208-685 DIV

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

Applicant : Fumiaki Takahashi, et al.  
Serial No. : 09/240,134  
For : SYSTEM CONTROL METHOD AND SYSTEM CONTROL APPARATUS  
Filed : January 29, 1999  
Examiner : L. Luu  
Art Unit : 2152

Assistant Commissioner for Patents  
Washington, D.C. 20231

Sir:

RESPONSE AFTER FINAL UNDER 37 CFR § 1.116

This is in response to the Office Action mailed on July 9, 2002.

The Examiner has rejected applicants' claims 33 and 47-75 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over the Baker et al. patent taken with the Douma, et al. patent. In order to avoid this rejection, applicants rely on their priority date of July 30, 1993 as the effective filing date of the subject application to remove the Douma, et al. patent as a validly citable reference.

More particularly, as set forth in applicants' claim for priority filed on January 29, 1999 (photo copy enclosed), applicants have claimed priority for the subject application based on the following Japanese applications: Japanese Patent Application No. Hei 05-189633; Japanese Patent Application No. Hei 05-189634; Japanese Patent Application No. Hei 05-189636; and Japanese Patent Application No. Hei 05-189637. These applications all have a Japanese filing date of July 30, 1993 and certified copies of these applications have been filed in the USPTO in

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service as First Class Mail in an envelope addressed to:  
Assistant Commissioner for Patents, Washington, D.C. 20231, on: September 27, 2002.

John I. Torrente

Signature

U.S. Patent Application No. 08/281,355, which is the grandparent of the subject application.

Additionally, applicants have filed herewith certified translations of such documents.

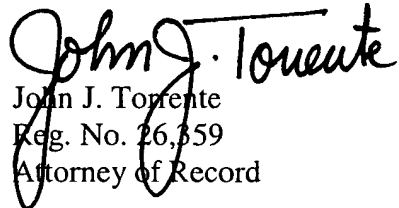
Based on these filings, applicants, as above-stated, rely on their priority date of July 30, 1993 as the effective filing date of the subject application. Since the filing date of the Douma, et al. patent, i.e., May 2, 1997, is after the July 30, 1993 effective filing date of the subject application, the Douma, et al. patent is not a validly citable reference against the application. Accordingly, the Examiner's rejection of applicants' claims based on the Baker, et al. patent and the Douma, et al. patent is not valid and should be withdrawn.

In view of the above, it is submitted that applicants' claims patentably distinguish over the validly citable references. Reconsideration of the claims is respectfully requested.

Dated: September 27, 2002

Respectfully submitted,

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